

# The NORTHWEST AIRLIFTER

Vol. 40, No. 10

McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

Connecting Team McChord with the Combat Airlift Mission

February 29, 2008

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## 5th ASOS Airman captures award

By

Staff Sgt. Eric Burks  
62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Daniel Strom of the 5th Air Support Operations Squadron was awarded the 2007 Joint Tactical Air Controller of the year honor in a ceremony Tuesday at the 5th ASOS building on Fort Lewis. The award, which was presented by Col. Doug Anderson, Air Combat Command, recognized Sergeant Strom for his outstanding service while deployed to Iraq last year.

Late in January 2007, then-Senior Airman Strom controlled attack aircraft for 20 hours during one battle, according to his citation. While under direct fire, he oversaw and directed the employment of seven laser-guided bombs, more than 4,000 rounds from an AC-130 Hercules gunship aircraft and six strafe passes. As a result of his efforts, 250 enemy fighters were killed, ten enemy buildings were destroyed and 410 enemy personnel were captured with minimal coalition losses.

Instead of recounting such experiences with bravado, Sergeant Strom reflects upon them with modesty, noting that he didn't expect the award, and was only recently informed he had made it to the highest level of consideration.

"It was a nice way to ring in the new year," he said.

Unlike many career fields in the Air Force, JTACs typically are aligned with Army units and spend a considerable amount of time outside of the wire during deployments. It is their job to control air strikes and advise ground forces during engagement, said Sergeant Strom.

Living and working with Soldiers is a quick way to establish a good relationship with the Army, said Sergeant Strom, noting that he was one of two Airmen in two Army brigades. While



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Cecilio M. Ricardo Jr.

**Staff Sgt. Daniel Strom punches in coordinates inside a Stryker assault vehicle to verify his position during a recent deployment. Sergeant Strom was embedded with Army forces to communicate coordinates for close-air support during fire fights with enemy ground forces.**

there may be an initial period of sibling rivalry, members of the sister services quickly adjust and learn how to make the most of their complementary skills.

Sergeant Strom said he also enjoyed the opportunity to participate in several humanitarian operations outside of his normal job spectrum. During one such operation, Soldiers and Airmen handed out soccer balls and candy to children in local communities.

As a recent Distinguished Graduate of McChord's Airman Leadership School, Sergeant Strom said his deployment gave him invaluable leadership experience. As he had already been

selected for promotion to staff sergeant, he served as supervisor to another senior airman. By the time he reached the ALS classroom, he had been supervising for nine months.

The air controller's accomplishments are in unison with the Air Force's newest slogan, "Above All." Col. Michael Caldwell, deputy director of Air Force public affairs, said in a news release that the campaign captures the professionalism of our Airmen, our technological edge and our ability to meet today's threats while at the same time prepare for future challenges. By that definition, Sergeant Strom's work certainly fits the bill.

## Wing All Call

There will be a Wing All Call on Monday and Tuesday at the base theater. This all call is a mandatory event for all Team McChord active duty military. Civilians are invited and encouraged to attend the brief.

The attendance schedule is Monday 10 a.m. (MXG, DS) and 3 p.m. (MXG, MSG, MDG), and Tuesday 10 a.m. (OG, MSG) and 3 p.m. (OG, Open seating).

## MPF limits service for two weeks

By

Tyler Hemstreet  
Staff writer

Starting Monday, the Military Personnel Flight will have extremely limited services available for two weeks, fully reopening on March 17.

The shutdown is to allow personnel time to move furniture, computers and phone lines to make room for additional staff, which is being absorbed into the MPF from various commander's support staffs across the wing, said Maj. Todd Ladd, 62nd Mission Support Squadron.

The move comes as part of Air Force-mandated personnel consolidation efforts, Major Ladd said.

"[The consolidation and brief closure] is the best way to ensure McChord Airmen still get top-notch personnel support," he said.

While it is recommended customers hold off on seeking help with personnel matters that are not considered urgent, there will be someone available to provide service during the two weeks, said Master Sgt. Ernest Burr, 62nd MSS.

Those emergency personnel matters include a lost or expired I.D. card or out-processing or

reenlistment with the date of separation happening within the closure period, Sergeant Burr said.

"We're going to help people out with any personnel matters that can't wait until March 17 to be accomplished," Major Ladd said.

In all cases, military members in uniform will have priority, he said.

During the two-week closure period, customers can call 982-8881 or 982-2172 for emergency help service.

When the MPF reopens in full on March 17, it will feature new customer service hours, opening at 7:30 a.m. and closing at 4:30 p.m.

### Weekend Weather

FRIDAY      SATURDAY      SUNDAY



Forecast generated at 7 a.m. Thursday  
Courtesy of the 62nd Operations Support Squadron

### Mission accomplished

Total McChord sorties .....	2,327
Total flying hours .....	7,550.9
Cargo moved (tons) .....	17,740.6
Departure reliability rate .....	95.2%
Mission capable rate .....	85.7%
Personnel currently deployed .....	431
Reservists currently activated.....	134
(Jan. 1 to Wednesday. Numbers updated Wednesday.)	

### Don't miss it ...

#### Wing Promotion Celebration

The monthly Wing Promotion Celebration is today from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the McChord Clubs and Community Center.





# Airman's Roll Call

## 'Above all' campaign: What Air Force does, how we do it

**Editor's note:** *Airman's Roll Call is designed for supervisors at all levels to help keep Airmen informed on current issues, clear up confusion, dispel rumors and provide additional face-to-face communication between supervisors and their teams.*

The Air Force has a new slogan: "Above All". The slogan is part of a new recruiting and awareness campaign that launched last week and will be featured on television, in print and online. In addition to being shown at several sporting events, "Above All" ads will be seen in magazines and during commercial breaks on many top-rated commercial and television news and entertainment programs. "Above All" is about what we do and how we

do it," said Col. Michael Caldwell, deputy director of Air Force Public Affairs. "The job of the Air Force is to defend America and we do that by dominating air, space and cyberspace. The new campaign and slogan captures our roots, but also illustrates where we're going as a service as the Air Force prepares to contend with future threats."

Some other points of interest: The basis of this campaign is the fact that the world has changed, so we must also change the way we protect American's interests and ideals at home and around the globe. The ads tell the story of the Air Force and feature real Airmen performing their mission to defend air, space and cyberspace. Before the campaign launch, the Air Force

conducted several surveys with Airmen, civilians and members of our sister services. The "Above All" slogan was chosen over several other phrases as the best description of the Air Force mission. The ads can be seen on several shows like the "CSI" series, "60 Minutes," and "Lost," as well as during the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament and the Final Four. "Above All" print ads will appear in various publications like: USA Today, Time, Newsweek and Popular Science. Online, "Above All" ads will run on MSNBC.com, Google.com and Yahoo.com, to name a few. More information on the "Above All" campaign can be seen on the Air Force Portal. *(Commentary courtesy Air Force Print News.)*

## Upcoming group reorganizations will streamline operations

By  
**Col. Frank Rechner**  
62nd Mission Support Group commander

In my last article, I compared life to a game of Texas Hold 'Em poker and the final statement was "I can't wait to see what is in your winning hand." Life certainly ran Team McChord hard over the past seven months. A short-notice Nuclear Surety Inspection, a Logistics Standardization Evaluation Program/Unit Compliance Inspection, an Air Traffic System Evaluation Program inspection, and a no-notice environmental and communication evaluations coupled with at least two surge operations have been the order of the day. In the end, the grade for all evaluations exceeded the command standard! For a long time, we were living from one inspection to the next with the wing at a furious pace. I asked folks what they thought

the wing needed. Overwhelmingly, the answer was a day off. While a stand-down day is not likely in the cards anytime soon, the point was well made — everyone needs to take some down time and enjoy life. The inspections have slowed down (I realize this is a relative term for those units still being inspected), and we are in a short-duration lull as we transition from UCI back into ORI/mobility and AEF 3/4 spin up. Take advantage of this time to rest, relax and recover. Though most of the country is still in the throes of winter, already the weather is turning better and people are getting out and about. Be safe in your activities — baseball and barbecues don't necessarily have to end up with pulled hamstrings and a fire department response. And speaking of change, in the coming months several things will change within the 62nd Mission Support Group. Personnel support will consolidate in the mission sup-

port squadron with the onset of the Base Level Service Delivery Module. I'll be honest with you, across the Air Force this is not a popular decision. But if it were not for this consolidation, deeper Program Budget Decision 720 cuts would have been made in every career field across the Air Force to allow us to operate like the "good ole days." Team McChord enjoyed these good ole days for longer than we should have: we delayed the start of BLSDM until after the UCI. Following right on the heels of BLSDM is the combining of the mission support squadron and the services squadron into the force support squadron. And finally, this summer the logistics readiness and aerial port squadrons should transition to the maintenance group, or new materiel group. These reorganizations and consolidations were not items we asked for, but they are needed and promise to bring about more streamlined operations.

One thing you did ask for is a change in the club, and I'm happy to report the change is on the right track. At the annual awards banquet, almost 400 people were served a quality dinner in less than 13 minutes. First Friday's attendance is up and the MXG/MSG second Friday gatherings provide a great opportunity to unwind in a casual social setting — a perfect way to wrap up the week. Stop on by and check it out — we'd love the opportunity to talk about whatever is on your mind. You've asked for my help to change the club, now I need your help: become a club member. Due to a policy change, I can no longer use appropriated money to pay for the club's electric bill. The \$70,000 for last year's bill must come from non appropriated funds. For officers who are not club members, I ask you to consider joining because your dues stay right here to fund future improvements.

## Professionals of the week

### 62nd Communications Squadron

#### Airman 1st Class Raymond Jones

**Duty title:**  
Ground radio maintenance technician

**Duty section:**  
Ground radio maintenance

**Hometown:**  
Salina, Kan.



#### Why he's super:

Just three months out of technical school, Airman Jones completed all six volumes of his career development course in just four months. Additionally, while troubleshooting a radio system, he identified an incorrect maintenance procedure, which potentially leads technicians Air Force-wide to remove and replace operational parts. His discovery prompted an immediate Air Force-wide technical order change and helped save \$1,300 each time the maintenance procedure is accomplished. He also recently repaired three radio systems enabling communications with aircraft patrolling a no-fly zone during the Super Bowl in Arizona.

#### Airman 1st Class Oldanges Skebong

**Duty title:**  
Administrative communications apprentice

**Duty section:**  
Mail center

**Hometown:**  
University Place, Wash.



#### Why he's tops:

During his first year of service, Airman Skebong is a leader within his work section and has made significant contributions to the Wing's Information Management program. He assisted base records management personnel with the review of six official records sets, helping each Officer Performance Review fix discrepancies before the Unit Compliance Inspection. Additionally, during the UCI he thoroughly impressed inspectors with his knowledge of proper mailing procedures and the handling of suspicious packages. His performance directly contributed to the Wing's Information Management program's "Outstanding" rating.

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#### 62ND AIRLIFT WING, MCCORD AFB, WASHINGTON

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## New online master's program for Air Force civilians now available

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Eligible Air Force civilians have until March 14 to apply for a new online master's degree program offered this June by Air University's Air Command and Staff College.

The two-year program, for civilians GS-11 and above and pay band-02 and above who don't already have their master's degree, consists of 33 semester hours and includes 11 eight-week courses that explore modern Air Force operations and leadership.

"For the first time, Air University is offering Air Force civilians the opportunity to earn an online master's degree at no cost to students other than books," said Suzette Daniel, a human resource specialist who serves as the course's program manager at the Air Force Personnel Center here. "This program offers our civilians a great force development opportunity to earn an advanced degree from an accredited institution."

After successfully completing the program, students earn a master's degree in Military Operational Art and Science. In addition, completion of this program satisfies the requirement of Joint Professional Military Education (Phase I) as well as intermediate level PME.

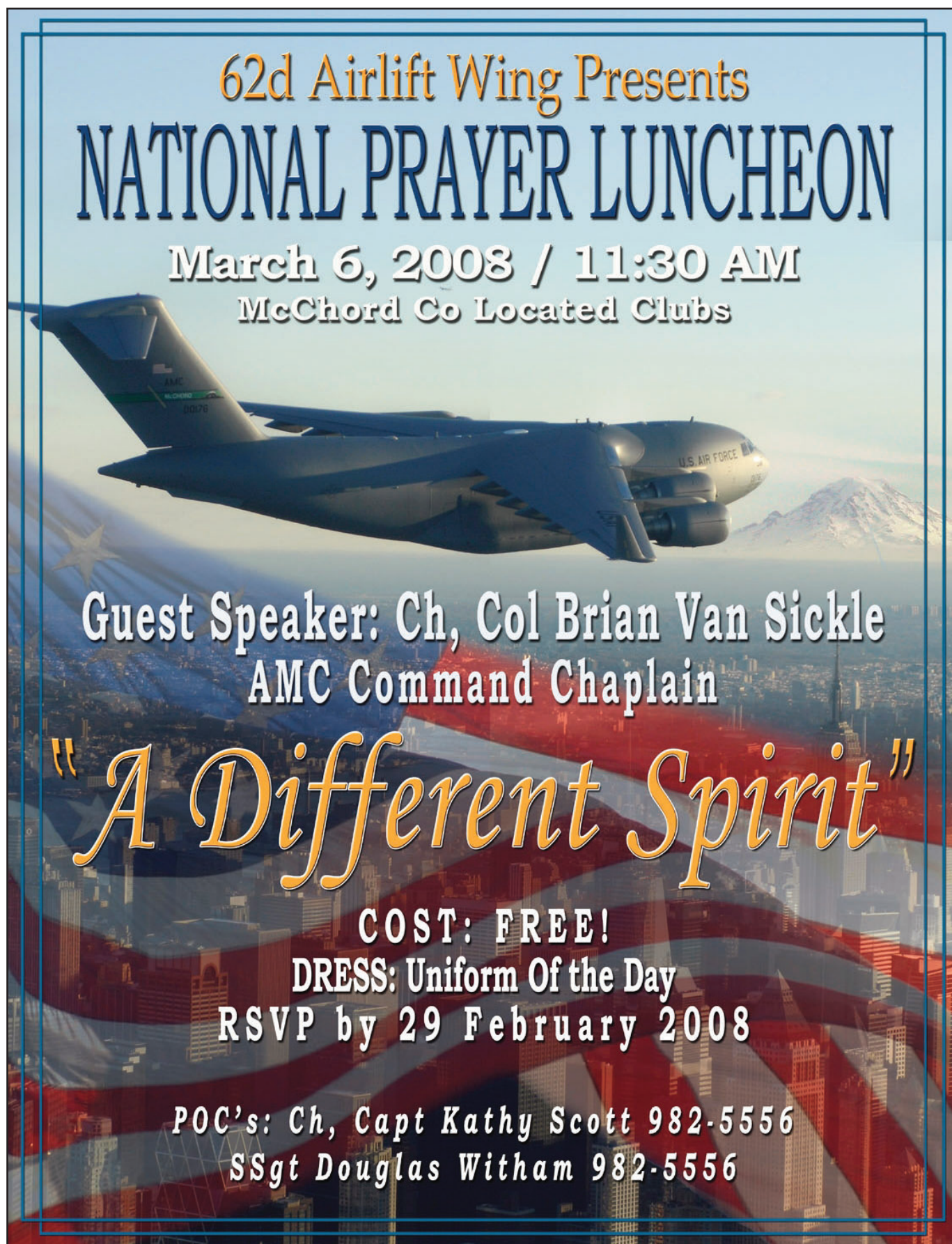
This new program is separate from ACSC's other traditional learning courses and space will be limited for June's pilot class, Ms. Daniel said.

"For the upcoming session, Air University will support about 30 people," Ms. Daniel said. "They want to first gauge the response and see how many people are interested before they decide to expand future quotas."

Once enrolled, students are required to complete the program on their own time; use of government time is not authorized.

To apply, scan and e-mail an AF Form 4059 to the global group box, "AFPC/DPIF Leadership Programs." For more information, call AFPC's Leadership Development Branch at 210-565-2524, or DSN 665-2524, or contact your career functional team representative at AFPC.

Additional information can be found by searching for "ACSC OLMP" on the center's "Ask" Web site.



62d Airlift Wing Presents  
**NATIONAL PRAYER LUNCHEON**  
**March 6, 2008 / 11:30 AM**  
**McChord Co Located Clubs**

Guest Speaker: Ch, Col Brian Van Sickle  
 AMC Command Chaplain

*"A Different Spirit"*

**COST: FREE!**  
**DRESS: Uniform Of the Day**  
**RSVP by 29 February 2008**

POC's: Ch, Capt Kathy Scott 982-5556  
 SSgt Douglas Witham 982-5556



# Air Force Aid Society provides alternative to pay-day loans

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Air Force Aid Society officials are pleased to announce the new Falcon Loan program available to Air Force members beginning Monday. A Falcon Loan is an interest-free loan of \$500 or less that is to be used for emergency needs such as basic living expenses — rent, utilities and food — car repairs, emergency travel or other approved needs. Applying for a Falcon Loan is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Download the application from the AFAS Web site (*www.afas.org*).
2. Get your ID card and current leave and earnings statement
3. Go to your Airman and Family Readiness Center

“The ease of the Falcon Loan program will hopefully encourage Airmen to turn to their Airman and Family Readiness Centers in times of financial need and not be ensnared

by potentially career-damaging debt traps,” said Chief Master Sgt. Pamela Derrow, the U.S. Air Forces in Europe command chief master sergeant.

“This program is just another example of AFAS’ continued effort to help take care of our Airmen,” she said.

The streamlined application process for a Falcon Loan requires no budget information, backup documentation or first sergeant or commander approval. Minimal information is required to process an allotment or Paymatic transaction — automatic withdrawal from bank account — and a signature is all that is needed to complete the application.

The relaxed approach to the loan process comes with the hope that Airmen will feel less threatened to come forward for help, and perhaps after getting a Falcon Loan will establish a relationship that draws

them back to the A&FRC for a follow-up visit to discuss their financial situation.

“One of the important missions of Airman and Family Readiness Centers is to promote financial readiness,” said Ms. Gretchen Shannon from the USAFE Airman and Family Readiness Branch. “The new AFAS Falcon Loan program will be helpful in diverting some Airmen faced with financial emergencies away from high interest pay-day lenders. The Airman and Family Readiness teams will be ready and available to assist members when the new program rolls out.”

To be eligible for a Falcon Loan, one must be an active duty Air Force member or spouse with power of attorney stationed at an Air Force base with an A&FRC, and cannot have a current Air Force Aid Society loan. One will be expected to repay the Falcon Loan by allotment within

10 months or by the estimated-time-of-separation date if less than 10 months.

“We are really hoping we can meet some people’s short-term financial needs with this program,” said AFAS officer Jim Flammio, 62nd Mission Support Squadron.

Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel activated on Title 10 orders at the time of application are eligible for a Falcon Loan as well.

The Falcon Loan is a complement to the AFAS’s standard emergency assistance loan/grant program. Receiving a Falcon Loan does not make a person ineligible to receive a standard AFAS loan/grant while they are repaying their Falcon Loan.

For more information on the Falcon Loan program, please call the Airman and Family Readiness Center at 982-2695 or visit the AFAS Web site. (*62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs contributed to this article.*)

**Do you have a story idea? Spread the news in *The NW Airlifter*!**  
Call Public Affairs at 982-5637 or e-mail us at [northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil](mailto:northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil)



# 62nd LRS makes license process easier for Airmen

By  
Tyler Hemstreet  
Staff writer

The 62nd Logistics Readiness Squadron’s operator records and licensing section recently unveiled a new policy which will not only make the process of acquiring or renewing a government license easier for unit vehicle control officers, but will also cut down on the section’s man hours required to complete the process.

Customers no longer have to appear in person at Bldg. 761 to fill out the proper forms to get the process started, said Staff Sgt. Eric Graczyk, 62nd LRS, assistant non commissioned officer in charge of the section.

VCOs will fill out an Air Force Form 171 for government vehicle operators in their unit —

verifying the trainer on the form is certified to train on that equipment and is on the trainer letter — and digitally sign an e-mail addressed to specific Airmen within the records and licensing section.

“We can then just print out the license, sign it, scan it, and then e-mail it back to get the operator’s signature,” Sergeant Graczyk said.

The entire process saves the VCOs a trip to the building and the section doesn’t have to staff the desk required to process the paperwork in person, he said.

The change in policy came about after the flight recognized a way to immediately improve customer service by applying lean principles, said Lt. Col. Travis Condon, 62nd LRS commander.

“With us at reduced manning at base level because of convoy taskings, this is a tremendous benefit to us and the wing,” Colonel

Condon said.

The move will free-up one or two people from licensing and allow them to get back to driving, Colonel Condon said.

“We’re able to eliminate that NCO spot at the desk while a group of us can respond to the e-mails during any down time we have,” Sergeant Graczyk said.

The office can usually complete each license acquisition or renewal within 24 to 48 hours, he said.

The section issues nearly 1,500 licenses per year and Colonel Condon estimates the change of policy will gain the wing back nearly 800 man hours in records and licensing and about 1,920 man hours per year in vehicle operations.

There are also plans to look at improving the process further by making it available on share-point, he said.

## 0-0-1-3



The medical standard is one drink for women or two drinks for men if a daily drinker. For periodic drinking, the standard is to keep the blood alcohol level or blood alcohol content under 0.05.

*Use personal risk management*  
*Use situational awareness*  
*Use your wingman*  
*Use a friend*

**0 Drinks under age 21**  
**0 DUI's**  
**Max 1 drink per hour**  
**Max 3 drinks in one night**

## DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE





McChord Airmen

# AROUND THE WORLD

Courtesy photo



**QAYYARAH AIRFIELD WEST, Iraq —** Senior Airman Corby Johnson maneuvers a 60,000-pound loader filled with cargo as Staff Sgt. George Parker looks on during a recent deployment. Both are deployed from the 62nd Aerial Port Squadron. The cargo movement is part of the Tender Program, a contracted airlift program companies use to move cargo in and out of the theater.

Photo by Capt. Jason McGree



**CAMP BUCCA, Iraq -** Airman 1st Class Michael Tulp, 62nd Security Forces Squadron, prepares an M-2 50 Caliber machine gun for an outside the wire mission on a recent deployment. Airman Tulp is deployed with the 887th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, which conducts combat patrols.



# AF looks to nature for innovations

## Artificial spider silk could improve body armor, parachutes

By  
Maria Callier  
Air Force Office of Scientific Research  
Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The Air Force Office of Scientific Research is supporting a team from the University of Wyoming that is investigating spider silk proteins to create biomaterials for military purposes.

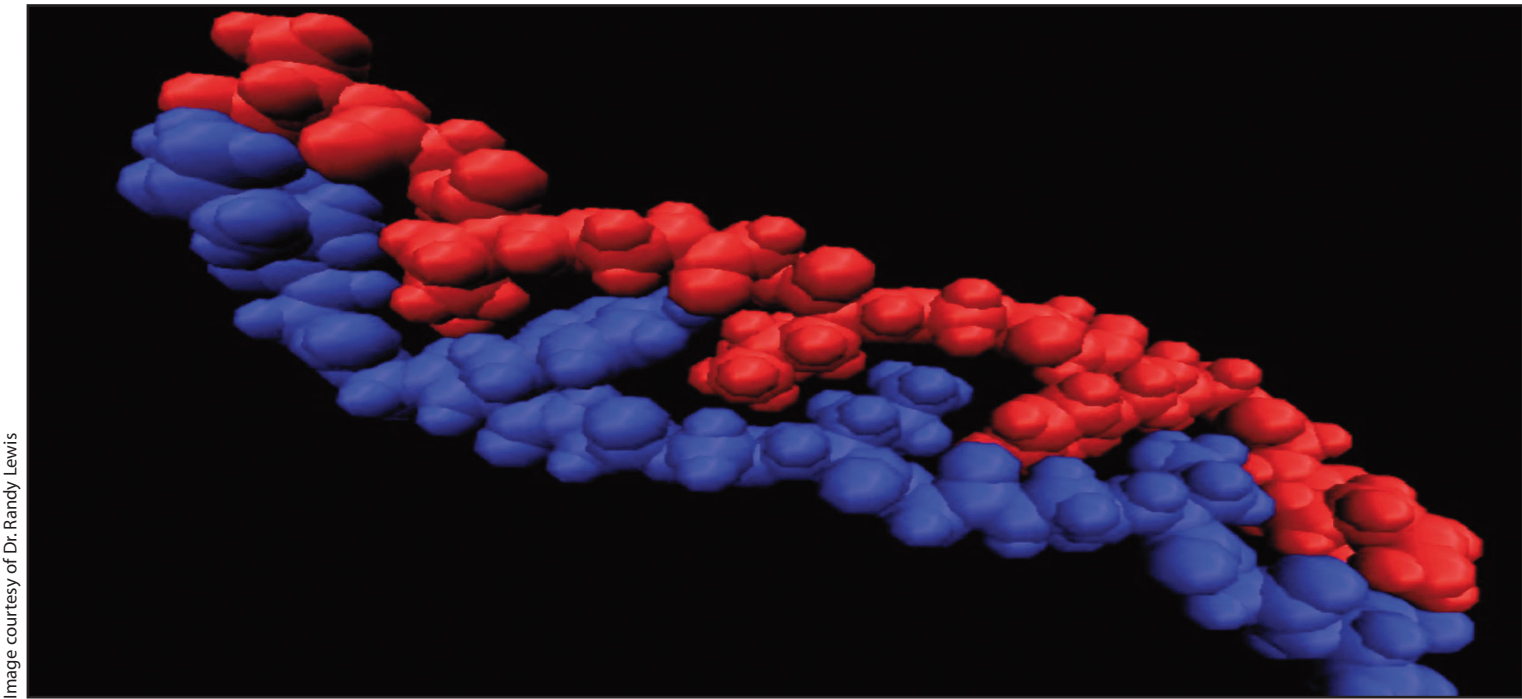
Producing useful quantities of natural spider silk has proven unrealistic because of challenges inherent in managing large numbers of small spiders which are typically cannibalistic.

As a result, researchers have been creating artificial spider silk that is stronger than the polymer Kevlar and more flexible than nylon.

To produce new kinds of spider silks, the team has made its own spider silk genes and put them into bacteria to produce chemically identical spider silk proteins for use in experiments.

“We then spin the proteins into fibers and test them for better properties,” said Dr. Randy Lewis, the team leader. “We also have produced genetically-modified goats that produce milk containing the spider silk proteins to aid us in our research.”

The proteins derived from the goat’s milk can be spun into strong,



**This image shows a small part of two spider silk protein molecules interacting like two sides of a zipper. The “teeth” of the zipper can be seen in the slots of the other molecule. These zippers on hundreds of thousands of proteins help form the spider silk fiber and give it its extraordinary strength.**

lightweight, and extremely elastic silk to be used in the construction of light, bulletproof vests for the military.

The fibers can also be used for much stronger parachutes enabling larger payloads to be delivered. They can also be used to create artificial ligaments.

“We have now produced 15 new

spider silks,” Dr. Lewis said. “We think that we should be able to improve their properties as we improve the process of spinning the fibers.”

“To make a 5-pound bulletproof vest, a producer would use 600 gallons of goat milk containing the silk protein.

The milk production from 200 goats in one day would be used for just one vest,” Dr. Lewis said in a recent article.

Dr. Lewis noted that spider silk body armor will be more expensive, however, the silk body armor is light and elastic and therefore more adaptable to different needs, he said.







Alissa Pennington, 4, participates in a class presentation designed to promote awareness about the importance of oral health among children last week at McChord's Child Development Center.

# Telling them the plain tooth

**American Dental Association:**  
*Good oral health practices should begin in infancy*

## Early Childhood Care

Baby bottle tooth decay can destroy your child's teeth. It occurs when a child is frequently exposed to sugary liquids such as milk, including breast milk, fruit juice and other sweet liquids. The ADA recommends the following steps to prevent your child from getting early childhood caries.

- Begin clearing your baby's mouth during the first few days after birth. After every feeding, wipe the baby's gums with a damp washcloth or gauze pad to remove plaque.
- Never allow your child to nurse or breast feed for prolonged periods and don't give him or her a bottle with milk, formula, sugar water or fruit juice during naps or at night in bed.
- Encourage children to drink from a cup by their first birthday.
- Discourage frequent use of a training (sippy) cup.
- Help your child develop good eating habits early and choose sensible, nutritious snacks. "Preventive dental care has greatly improved the oral health of American children," said Kimberly Harms, D.D.S., American Dental Association consumer advisor and general dentist from Farmington, Minn. "It is now possible for many children to reach adulthood without ever experiencing tooth decay and that is why good oral health practices should begin in infancy and continue throughout adult life."

## Dental Visits

The ADA recommends regular dental check-ups, including a visit to the dentist within six months of the eruption of the first tooth, and no later than the child's first birthday. Preventive care such as cleanings and fluoride treatments provide your child with "smile" insurance.

Routine dental exams uncover problems that can be treated in the early stages, when damage is minimal and restorations may be small. When necessary, dental radiographs are taken to see how the teeth are developing and to spot hidden decay.



Photos by Abner Guzman

## Dental Sealants

Sealants are used to protect the chewing surfaces from tooth decay, the single most common chronic childhood disease. However, your dentist can help prevent or reduce the incidence of decay by applying sealants to your child's teeth.

- A sealant is a clear or tooth-colored plastic material that is applied to the chewing surface of the back teeth where decay occurs most often.
- Sealants protect normal depressions and grooves in the teeth called pits and fissures, which are particularly susceptible to tooth decay.

## Mouth Protectors

Any child involved in a recreational activity, such as soccer, hockey, football, roller blading, riding a scooter and even bicycling should wear a mouth guard. There are "stock" mouth guards available in stores and a better-fitting variety, which are custom fitted by your dentist. Ask your dentist about using a mouth protector.

(Article reprinted with permission)



## Photo descriptions

**Top left:** Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Goedert, an advanced oral hygiene technician assigned to the 62nd Medical Operations Squadron, looks on as Carter Lake Elementary kindergartners Isaiah Payne, left, and JaDajah Reynolds take turns brushing Fred the Cow's teeth during a demonstration last week designed to promote awareness about the importance of oral health among children.

**Top right:** Airman 1st Class Roberto Mendez, left, and Staff Sgt. Harry Dennard, both 62nd Medical Operations Squadron, field a question from four-year-old Deven Swaim during a presentation last week at the Child Development Center. Airmen from McChord's Dental clinic handed out goodie bags containing toothpaste, a toothbrush, coupons and a pamphlet promoting the importance of oral health, to CDC and Carter Lake Elementary Kindergarten classrooms.

**Middle left:** Airman Mendez and Sergeant Dennard look on as Swaim demonstrates his version of oral hygiene during the presentation.

**Middle right:** Four-year-old Mark Olszewski places his newly supplied toothbrush above his classroom's sink at the CDC.

**Bottom right:** Airman 1st Class Shay Wood, left, and Sergeant Goedert, both 62nd MDOS, speak to a group of Carter Lake Elementary kindergartners last week about the importance of flossing.



# Recruit loses 120 pounds to join AF



Courtesy photo

**Daniel Kuertz of Columbus, Ohio, recently lost 120 pounds to join the Air Force. Mr. Kuerz is scheduled to enter Basic Military Training in March at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.**

**By**  
Staff Sgt. Chad T. Tanner  
338th Recruiting Squadron

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Growing up in Columbus, a young man admired Airmen from nearby Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and he thought joining the Air Force was a logical conclusion since his father and other family members served in the military.

But the problem for Daniel Kuertz was he weighed 320 pounds. The weight helped him play high school and college football, but the weight was keeping him from enlisting into the Air Force. He would have to lose 120 pounds to qualify to enter the service.

Instead of giving up, he fought to lose the weight. He cut out sodas, limited his meal portions, switched to healthier foods and started an intense fitness regime in 2006.

One year after changing to a healthier lifestyle, Mr. Kuertz stepped into an Air Force recruiting office in Columbus where he met Staff Sgt. Paul Lindsey. Mr. Kuertz still had a few more pounds to lose, so Sergeant Lindsey told him to come back in a few weeks when he had lost the additional weight.

This is not an uncommon occurrence at a recruiting office, Sergeant Lindsey said.

“Nine times out of 10, we never see them again,” the recruiter said.

But he did see Mr. Kuertz again — minus the extra pounds. Today, not

only has Mr. Kuertz lost 120 pounds, but he has qualified for training in one of the Air Force’s most elite career fields — combat control — and will enter Basic Military Training in March at Lackland AFB, Texas.

Combat controllers are combat forces assigned to special tactics squadrons within the Air Force Special Operations Command. Their mission is to deploy by the most feasible means available into combat and non-permissive environments. They are special forces who establish assault zones, while simultaneously providing air traffic control, fire support and command and control communications in the joint arena.

Mr. Kuertz is scheduled to attend several training courses, including a two-week combat orientation course, a 15.5-week combat control operator course, a three-week airborne school, a three-week survival school course, and a 14-week special tactics air traffic controller course, which serves as the capstone to the entire training experience.

“All the Airmen I’ve had a chance to meet have nothing but compliments about the Air Force and the benefits of making it a career are certainly enticing,” Mr. Kuertz said. “It is hard to say now whether I will stay for a career, but it is definitely an option, which I cannot rule out.”

Susan Kuertz, his mother, said she and her husband are very proud of their son.

“We’ve seen this determination throughout his life,” she said. “Danny will be an asset wherever he goes.”





# AF leaders discuss future challenges

**By**  
**Staff Sgt. Monique Randolph**  
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

ORLANDO, Fla. — Commanders from Air Force major commands spoke to Airmen, Air Force Association members and other attendees about the challenges facing their organizations during the AFA’s 24th annual Air Warfare Symposium and Technology Exposition held here Feb. 21 and 22.

Driving home the urgent need to recapitalize the Air Force’s aging fleet of aircraft and space systems, commanders outlined the effects that operating decades-old equipment has had on the ability of their commands’ Airmen to perform their various missions.

“We are part of a team that supports federal agencies to make sure your families are protected,” said Gen. Victor E. Renuart Jr., commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. “Some countries are developing and moving rapidly toward a fifth-generation capability, whether it’s surface-to-air defense or air-to-air capability in their fighters. Do we know if they will be enemies or

friends? The future is uncertain. But can we afford to lag behind them and wait and see? I think not.”

Gen. Carrol H. “Howie” Chandler, commander of Pacific Air Forces at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, briefed the audience about organizational changes within PACAF. Among those changes are the creation of the 36th Contingency Response Group at Andersen AFB, Guam, a group of assets organized under a single commander that can rapidly deploy anywhere theater wide to set up an airfield. Also, plans continue to bed-down the Global Hawk unmanned aerial vehicle at Andersen beginning in 2009.

General Chandler also spoke about the need to modernize the tanker fleet at Hickam which ranges in age from 44 to 51 years old. These tankers provide the air bridge necessary to move cargo and fighter assets throughout the Pacific.

Aircraft aren’t the only Air Force assets in urgent need of recapitalization. U.S. Space Command is also challenged with using aging space systems to provide essential capabilities for the Air Force.

Would-be adversaries know how the U.S. uses space in its warfighting capabilities, and understand how challenging the Air Force on that front can provide a way to con-

tend with American air power, said Gen. C. Robert Kehler, commander of Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB.

“Space power has helped shape the American approach to warfare; it gives our warfighters a precise advantage,” General Kehler said. “Without space, military operations would be far less precise, focused, timely, coordinated and efficient, and far more costly.”

While the Air Force has made and is making strides to develop new systems and extend the life of existing systems, there is still a need for a new way of developing and deploying space capabilities, the general said.

General Corley, commander of Air Combat Command, spoke about the importance of maintaining air dominance and learning from previous conflicts and wars.

“Our ability to provide global vigilance, reach and power is predicated on the continued ability to own the skies,” he said. “Our ability to achieve air dominance depends on overmatch in both capability and capacity. We must possess and maintain overmatch, and today that’s becoming increasingly at risk.”

Over the years, rivals have come to challenge the Air Force’s capabili-

ties, General Corley said. Decades-old fighters are overmatched by newer operational fighters being exploited by potential adversaries.

General Lichte echoed those concerns for Air Mobility Command aircraft.

“The size of the fleet and force are decreasing, but airlift requirements continue an upward trend,” said the AMC commander.

The general compared the current operations tempo to that of the Berlin Airlift, the largest humanitarian airlift effort in Air Force history. During the Berlin Airlift, aircraft in Berlin were taking off and landing every 90 seconds. Today, aircraft around the Air Force are conducting operations at a similar pace; every 82 seconds an AMC aircraft is taking off or landing somewhere in the world, General Lichte said.

“Since we started the Global War on Terror, our manpower has gone down some six percent, and we’re doing this with some tired aircraft as well,” he said. “The mobility air forces have just short of 500 KC-135s, and we operate the oldest heavy airframes in the U.S. (compared to civilian industry). We should be thinking about moving these aircraft through our fleet at a much quicker pace so we can gain efficiencies.”





# Airmen treat Iraqi children injured in mortar attack



Photo by Senior Airman Julianne Showalter

**Staff Sgt. Delbert Smith treats an Iraqi child recently at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base, Iraq. The child was injured by an 82-millimeter mortar round, which struck a soccer field where he and other children were playing in the village of Al Jumia. Sergeant Smith is a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Operations Squadron intensive care unit technician deployed from Keesler Air Force Base, Miss.**

By

Maj. Vanessa Hillman

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Air Force Theater Hospital Airmen here helped save the lives of seven Iraqi children who were playing soccer when they were wounded in an recent attack by insurgents in Al Jumia, Iraq.

The seven wounded children were transported to the base and were treated for various injuries.

Two were treated for minor injuries and released; five required additional surgery. The children were wounded when two 82-millimeter mortar rounds struck a soccer field in the village of Al Jumia. One 12-year-old child died in the attack.

Lt. Col. (Dr.) Todd Rasmussen, a 332nd Air Expeditionary Medical Group trauma and vascular surgeon, said two of the children had suffered very serious injuries.

“One child had a chest wound and we needed to implant a chest tube to drain the fluid and reinflate the lung,” he said. “The most seriously wounded was a 5-year-old boy with a penetrating wound below the right knee that cut off the blood flow to the lower leg and foot.”

The limb would have only been able to survive four hours without blood flow before it would have needed to be amputated, said Colonel Rasmussen who is deployed from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

“We (the surgeons) spent four hours on him reconstructing the blood flow to save the leg,” he said.

The challenge for Colonel Rasmussen was working on the small blood vessels of a 5-year-old.

“This type of vascular repair was extremely

tough due to his age,” he said. “We don’t see (patients this age) at home station.”

The prognosis for the boy’s leg is very good, he said.

“He lost a significant amount of blood, but we feel at this point the limb salvage was a success,” Colonel Rasmussen said. “The leg looks remarkably well this morning and he’s off the ventilator. He’s really a tough kid. He’ll require many more operations and we’ll give him the best we have to give his leg every opportunity to be fully functional.”

Colonel Rasmussen said he and the hospital staff were taken aback by the reaction of the children as they were brought bleeding into the emergency room.

“What struck us was the children were silent as they were brought in,” he said. “In the U.S., the children would have been crying. The Iraqi children were very accepting of the situation. We (at the Air Force Theater Hospital) unfortunately have a growing experience with pediatric trauma. We enjoy offering care to those who need it, but it is sad and depressing that we’re working on innocent children.”

The children were playing in the village of Al Jumia, north of Balad AB. A total of four rounds were launched toward the base. While all fell short of the intended target, two of the rounds struck the field where the children were playing soccer.

According to U.S. military sources, the attack was most likely carried out by al-Qaida in Iraq forces.

“This was yet another desperate attack by forces that have no regard for the Iraqi people or their future,” said Col. Steven Shepro, the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing vice commander. “We relentlessly continue to pursue this enemy jointly with speed and precision while healing the wounds they leave in their wake.”





# Airmen mentor Afghan national army

By

Staff Sgt. Ian Carrier  
American Forces Network, Afghanistan

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KABUL, Afghanistan — Airmen from the 755th Expeditionary Support Squadron here are currently mentoring Afghan national army soldiers at the Logistics Support Operations Center in Kabul.

The Airmen work closely with their Afghan counterparts to assist them setting up a web of logistics throughout the country.

The eventual goal is to have the ANA be completely self-sufficient. The center is the primary logistics hub for the ANA and Afghan national police in Afghanistan. The 90-man unit handles all classes of materials, excluding medical supplies, which they should get by the end of the year, said Col. John McGuire, the 755th ESPTS senior mentor for the Logistics Support Operations Center.

“Small steps here make a big difference,” Colonel McGuire said. “It was a big step to get them to handle their own supplies. They knew the theory behind logistics and we are mentoring them to help them improve. One of the challenges was to get agencies to talk to each other and getting the ANA to work together.”

“We have several depots in Kabul,” said ANA Col. Nabi Ahmadzi, the Logistics Support Operations Center commander. “We supply all the ANA and ANP from these depots.”

“We mentor and help with problems that may come up,” said Capt. Atley Gray , a senior mentor to the Distribution Office. “We try as mentors to have our counterparts come up with solutions. This is their country; we try not to interfere. They come to us for guidance and we give direction. We don’t tell them what to do.

“It’s been great working with the colonel and

his staff,” Captain Gray said. “They are willing to learn. They thank me, and I thank them back because it’s easier to teach people who want to learn.”

One of the ways the mentors are trying to streamline the logistical process is by getting the ANA up to speed with computer technology, making data more streamlined by using spreadsheets instead of dry-erase boards.

Senior Master Sgt. Wendel Wilson and Tech. Sgt. Natalie Cerchio, both with the 755th ESPTS, are mentors for the Central Supply Depot. They teach Afghan soldiers basic computer skills such as Word and Excel. The training began in April 2007. So far, 120 students have been taught, and the program is expected to continue.

“It is fun and challenging,” Sergeant Cerchio said. “You have to break things down and start at the basic level. They are the future of this country, and someday they will be teaching others the skills we have taught them.”

An important link in the chain is the Central Movement Agency. This is where all the vehicles that transport the supplies are kept. There are five truck companies; two light, one medium, one heavy and a headquarters company.

The mentors at the Central Movement Agency help the Afghans with convoy scheduling, techniques, property book managing and fuel management.

Approximately 100 convoys are run a week, said Master Sgt. James Fink, assigned to the 755th ESPTS and a Central Movement Agency mentor. These convoys are run through coordination with the Logistics Support Operations Center.

The mentoring Airmen of the 755th ESPTS are helping change the way the ANA conduct their logistics, and in turn are helping Afghanistan in the war on terrorism.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Ian Carrier

**Tech. Sgt. Natalie Cerchio gives computer instruction to an Afghan national army colonel recently at Kabul, Afghanistan. Sergeant Cerchio, assigned to the 755th Expeditionary Support Squadron, is one of the Airmen mentors who work with ANA soldiers to help them improve upon their logistics skills. Part of the training is to teach them to use computers to track their supplies.**





McChord Thrift Shop

The McChord Thrift Shop will host a bag sale tomorrow from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For \$5 per bag (provided by the Thrift Shop), customers can fill the bag with whatever items they prefer. All large clearance items that cannot fit in a bag will be 50 percent off their marked price.

The McChord Thrift Shop is located in Bldg. 717 across from Adventures Unlimited. To get to the Thrift Shop from the main gate, turn left on Barnes Blvd., then turn right on Battery. For more information, call 982-2468.

Commissary early closure

The McChord Commissary will close early on March 18 so the staff can conduct an inventory. The hours of operation will be from at 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Normal hours of operation will resume on March 19.

The Clothesline Project

People can express their thoughts, feelings or community safety suggestions by decorating a Sexual Assault Awareness Month T-Shirt from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday and Wednesday at Habanero Mexican Grill.

The goal of the free event is to increase awareness and celebrate a

survivor’s strength as well as provide another avenue for her or him to courageously break the silence that often surrounds their experience.

All participants’ information will remain confidential. During Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April, certain T-Shirts may be anonymously displayed in the Customer Service Mall in Bldg 100. For more information, call 982-0457.

Scholarship opportunity

The McChord Officer Spouses’ Club is offering college scholarships to college-bound high school seniors who are Air Force dependents and to spouses of Air Force personnel enrolled in degree-granting college programs.

Application packets are available at the following locations:

- McChord Base Education Office
- McChord Airman and Family Readiness Center
- McChord Library
- McChord Thrift Shop
- high school guidance counselors’ offices

For more information, please contact Emily Manuel at (253) 875-8974 or *teachmanuel@earthlink.net*. Completed applications must be postmarked by Mar. 10.

Faith and Worship Programs

For more information, call the chapel support center at 982-5556.

Adult Bible study is from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the base chapel support center, Bldg. 746

Schedule of worship services

**Catholic Services:**  
All Catholic services are in chapel two.  
Saturday: 4 p.m. Confession  
5 p.m. Mass  
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Mass  
11 a.m. Mass

**Protestant Services:**  
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Liturgical worship: Chapel one  
9:45 a.m. Sunday school for all ages at the chapel support center  
11 a.m. Traditional worship: Chapel one  
11 a.m. Contemporary service: Chapel support center

**Jewish Services:**  
Friday: 6 p.m. Fort Lewis chapel every 1st, 3rd and 5th at the corner of 12th Street and Liggett Avenue 967-6590

**Orthodox Activities:**  
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy, St. Nicholas Church, 15th Street and Yakima Avenue, Tacoma

**Other services:**  
Orthodox Christian Community, Cascade Chapel, Fort Lewis  
Sundays: 8:45 a.m. Pre-Communion prayers  
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Confession is by appointment only. Call Father John Anderson at 967-1717 or 906-6843 or e-mail *father.anderson@us.army.mil*.

